The Black Cat

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MAY 1903

How the Bigelow House Got Painted.
$500 Prize Story.
M. I. Coggeshall.

The Last Trip of Little Betsy.
Howard E. Morton.

A Bride in Ultimate.
Don Mark Lemon.

To the Man It Most Concerns.
Irene Gardner.

At the Bottom of the Sea.
Gordon Artherton.

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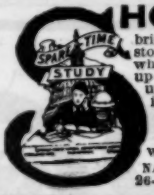

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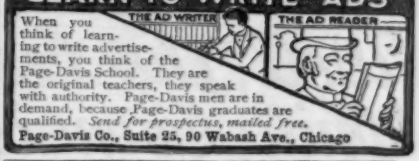

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How the Bigelow House Got Painted.*

BY M. I. COGGESHALL.

"IT ought to be done!"

"It simply *must* be done."

"There is no such auxiliary as 'must' in poverty's dictionary," remarked Cecilia Bigelow calmly.

"There is no other"; asserted her sister Janet. "The house has got to be painted. It is a libel on our ancestors. It will soon be known as 'Peeling-paint Paradise' instead of the 'Old Bigelow Mansion.' I, for one, am ashamed to turn in at the gate"; and to make her words as emphatic as her feelings Janet brought her hand down on the table with a thump that made the dishes rattle.

"The cloth is getting thin, Janet," Mrs. Bigelow mildly suggested.

"To match the paint on the house," remarked Cecilia.

"A harmony of transparencies!" came from Janet.

"Do you realize, girls, how much it would cost?" Mrs. Bigelow asked.

"Fifty dollars."

"Nearer a hundred. It is useless for us to talk about it this

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* The writer of this story was awarded the Piano Prize — $500 — in THE BLACK CAT story contest ending February 26, 1902.

year. Another winter it may not be so cold, our coal bill will be less, and in the spring, or summer following — "

"Or the autumn after that, or the spring succeeding! The same old story. Just how long ago did it have its last coat, Mamma? I know I was in pinafores, for I remember getting some of the yellow ochre on my best dimity one. It was the summer before I had the measles — I must have been six years old. Twenty years ago! Whew, nobody can blame the *paint*. It's got to be done some way, by hook or by crook," and Janet again made the gesticulations of her hand enforce the determination of her mind, but this time she spared the tablecloth.

"It's horrible to be so poor!" said Cecilia, scraping her preserve dish.

"Awful!" echoed Janet. "A huge joke in books, but a long-continued tragedy in real life. For the present we will swallow our pride and wash the dishes, but my determination remains unaltered. The house *must* and *shall* be painted."

The house whose unpainted condition was thus agitating a usually quiet family circle was a square frame building, standing back from the street with a shaded lawn sloping to the sidewalk. It had been built by a certain Judge Bigelow in the early thirties, when size, rather than architecture, was indicative of opulence, and was now occupied by three of his descendants, Mrs. Charles Bigelow and her two daughters, Janet and Cecilia, both teachers in the public schools.

The old Judge had been reputed rich and had surrounded himself with the splendors of his time. His descendants sat penniless among the faded glories of a past grandeur. To be sure, ingrains and mattings had replaced the old-fashioned body brussels and tapestries, but the heavy mahogany furniture still gave an air of distinction to the big rooms, and old family portraits lost none of their dignity because they were daily witnesses to innumerable small economies and menial acts which the Judge, in the flesh, would have considered degrading to a gentlewoman. As Janet had once remarked in the bosom of her family, there was no trade she had not mastered, from paper hanging to tailoring. Fortunately for the Bigelow pride, their friends were not inquisitive, and though they often remarked to one another how well the interior

of the old mansion was preserved, they were not particular as to how the new coat of paint was put on or when the faded wall papers were replaced by newer and more modern ones. But while the inside was thus kept up by active brains and busy fingers, the outside presented each year a shabbier face to the world. First the north and west sides, then the south and east, assumed the appearance of a gray, yellowish and green patchwork combination which, like a chameleon, had the power of taking on different hues — especially after a rain storm — when it would present most startling and distracting color schemes.

"If there were only less of it!" Janet would often sigh to herself as she came up the broad front walk. But now she had determined that something must be done, some remedy must be found, and when Janet Bigelow made up her mind "firm and square," as she called it, the elements had to move. People who knew her said it was the old Judge in her, and that if she had been a boy she would have made the family fortunes again.

A trivial incident, which Janet for various reasons did not repeat to her family, had brought about this determination. That night, on her way home from school, she had overheard the conversation of two gentlemen just in front of her.

The first had said:

"It is a standing disgrace to the street."

And the second:

"A neglected-appearing place."

Both had looked at the once haughty mansion. Janet felt for it and for herself. She crept on behind the speakers with a shamefaced air, passed her home, turned down the next street and stole like a culprit in at the back gate, her teeth set and her resolution made. But how to put her resolution into effect was now the question uppermost in her mind. Plan after plan passed through her brain for more than a week, and then, one beautiful June morning when the birds were singing their early matin song, a solution came. It popped into her head like an inspiration. She rushed from her room in *robe de nuit* and floating hair and banged successively at Mrs. Bigelow's and Cecilia's doors. Both ladies sprang out of bed in the wildest consternation.

"I've got it! I've got it!" Janet was repeating in a high treble.

"Got what — a fit?" inquired Cecilia, cross at being thus rudely aroused at sunrise on a Saturday holiday.

"What *have* you got?" echoed Mrs. Bigelow, relieved to find that Janet was not holding a burglar by the hair.

"The solution to the problem. The key to the enigma. The secret of painting the house."

"You haven't discovered a gold mine in the cellar, have you?" yawned Cecilia.

"No, but I have thought of a treasure in the attic. There's the beard that Uncle Henry used when he acted 'Falstaff,' and the moustache that Cousin Jennie insisted upon wearing as 'Romeo,' because you remember she said no girl could properly thrill at a kiss unless she felt hairs, Angela Woodman least of all; and besides, there must be shirts, and trousers and lots of other truck belonging to men."

"For mercy's sake, what have false beards and moustaches and shirts to do with painting a house?"

"If you will listen I will explain."

Cecilia, anticipating a long explanation before the connection between a beard and a freshly-painted house was established, crept back into bed, while Mrs. Bigelow, with something of the same idea in mind, swathed herself in a muslin apron.

"It's just this. Vacation begins next week and we shall have a deal more time than money. At present, thanks to the summer foliage, the house is comparatively hidden from observation. Under such favorable conditions I am going to paint it myself."

"You!"

"Yes, I — disguised as a man."

"Janet Bigelow, you have taken leave of your senses!"

"Not at all, my dear Mother; and as for Cecilia, she need not gurgle so derisively from the bed clothes. Why is it any more difficult to paint a clapboard outside than a mopboard in? And I have earned a diploma at the last. The paint, as near as I can find out, will only cost about twenty dollars — perhaps less. We can afford that outlay. As for the rest, I shall enjoy the air, the novelty, and, more than all, that the house is being painted."

"Ridiculous! Impossible! What a notion! You will break your neck!"

"Didn't I pick all the pears last August from the topmost branches, and all the cherries the year before? You will see whether I am foolish or not. On the 19th the Briggses go to their summer home, and the Thurbers follow three days later. That leaves the coast clear on the front and one side, and Mrs. Arlington told me night before last that she and her husband expected to take a trip to Niagara and the Thousand Isles for the first two weeks in July. Their departure clears the other side, and that is the time I will take to do it."

No persuadings, threats or warnings could dissuade Janet from her purpose, and Mrs. Bigelow and Cecilia settled down into regarding it all as a huge joke, not even being convinced of the reality of Janet's determination when she unrolled a scroll of sample paints and asked their advice on the selection of a shade.

Meantime, many and mysterious were the preparations Janet made. As if fearful that her own resolutions would weaken, she proceeded at once to carry out her plans. Much of her time was spent rummaging in the large, old-fashioned attic, her first available find being a pair of ancient-style duck trousers. These had been finely laundered in some far-past day, and Janet felt it almost criminal to destroy their shiny whiteness, but necessity knew no law and, hanging them over a bottomless chair, she vigorously bespattered them with the mixed contents of several tubes of oil and water colors, until they resembled a prize landscape from the impressionist school of art. Having dried them in the sun she completed their degradation by sundry laps and folds until her feet became visible and her waist was encircled but once. But the worst was yet to come, for they had been cut and made far back in the time of hoop skirts, when man, wishing to reserve a small share of space for himself, had attempted to combat woman's possession of it by giving a bloomer effect to his trousers. With all her skirts tucked into them there was yet space to spare. In her dilemma Janet sought Cecilia, who, though utterly disapproving of the serious side of the project, was not unwilling to lend her aid to the comical.

"They do look rather flabby, that's a fact!" was that young lady's verdict. "You will have to grow to them, Janet, or stuff them. How would wadding do?"

"Wadding — in July!" exclaimed Janet, paling at the prospect.

"You might put another pair under them. Those are meant for overalls, anyway. Men always wear a better and heavier pair underneath."

"So they do. What a dunce"; and Janet mounted to the attic again.

There had been few men of late in the Bigelow family and what trousers they had left behind had long since been absorbed by the rag-man or the moths. Janet delved into box after box and finally drew forth from the depths of an old chest a black broadcloth suit. It was carefully folded in a white sheet and had a very sacred appearance, but Janet, feeling sure it could not have been used for either a burial-shroud or a christening-robe, and knowing of no other commemorative epoch in life, concluded it must have belonged to her grandfather the Judge, and saw no reason why a past splendor should not yield to a present necessity. When she again presented herself before her mother and sister she was arrayed in the entire suit, long, close trousers, swallow-tailed coat and white satin vest. Cecilia rolled over on the floor in a fit of hysterical laughter, while Mrs. Bigelow looked the image of despair.

"Janet Bigelow, those were your father's wedding clothes!"

"Oh, dear!" said Janet, an amusing mixture of contrition and comicality.

"Nothing is sacred, nowadays, nothing," sighed Mrs. Bigelow.

"I couldn't find anything else," protested Janet, but Mrs. Bigelow had left the room.

"I think mamma was crying," said Cecilia.

"Oh, dear!" repeated Janet, again wishing she were more than five feet six and not so slim. "I'll see they get back all right, and will look further, though I cannot promise not to get into something else sacred to memory."

"Your feet look decidedly queer!" remarked Cecilia as Janet was disappearing through the doorway.

Janet paused and surveyed her trim 4 1-2 A's ruefully.

"What shall I do? I don't believe there is a pair of men's boots on the premises."

"Buy a pair of cheap sneakers."

"Exactly! Cecilia, you're a brick!"

A masculinity of feeling and action seemed to have come upon her with her change of costume, and when the metamorphosis was complete — her long hair tucked up under a cap, the beard and moustache upon her face, sneakers on her feet and an outing shirt tucked into the bespattered ducks, she felt like quite another being and confided to the much-horrified Cecilia that, with the addition of a pipe, she thought she could swear.

"No one would ever recognize you as Janet Bigelow, never," cried Cecilia in an ecstasy over her make-up. "Don't come too near me; it makes me nervous to have you so familiar, you are so much like a man. But, whatever happens, don't let your hat blow off or your hands be seen. If you do your secret's out."

"I might wear gloves."

"And be a house painter!"

"At least I can keep my hands in my pockets"; and suiting the action to the word they disappeared from sight and she swaggered off whistling.

"There's a law against women wearing men's clothes," said Mrs. Bigelow, in a last forlorn effort to stem the tide of events, for she and Cecilia had by this time decided that Janet was really in earnest and fully determined to execute her threat.

As to Janet herself, she was not without misgivings as to the outcome of her scheme. The nearer she approached its realization the more her trepidation increased, though she bravely hid it under a joking exterior. Over and over again she asked herself what it was she feared. She was more athletic than many of the opposite sex; she could mount a ladder and manipulate a paint brush. She had brains and skill; what she lacked, then, must be courage — courage to face the novelty of a new position. She might feel the same on the eve of embarkation for a trip to Europe.

She saw Mr. and Mrs. Arlington start on their provincial tour with mingled feelings of satisfaction and dismay, for with their departure serious work would begin. That night she got her paint pots ready and with Cecilia's help dragged the long ladders out and planted them firmly against the house.

The next morning Janet Bigelow had disappeared from view, but a bearded man in painter's garb could be seen carefully remov-

ing the blinds from the Bigelow mansion, and later applying a new coat of paint to the weather-worn clapboards. When Janet first ascended the ladder she felt a creepiness, and the gables of the old-fashioned house seemed leagues away from the greensward below, but a girl who in the summer could wave her handkerchief from lighthouse summits, and dive from the piers at low tide, was not likely to be daunted by an aërial position. The day was beautiful, the air soft and cool, and Janet began to enjoy her high perch. Once or twice she caught herself warbling strains from familiar operas. Then realizing they were not consistent with her character, she whistled them lustily, instead. At regular intervals Mrs. Bigelow would ask from behind the curtain:

"Are you safe, Janet?" and the bearded painter would answer in dulcet tones, "Perfectly, Mamma."

That day Janet ate her dinner from a pail in the barn, for, as far as possible, she was determined to carry out the masquerade. While she was eating it with a zest, born of an outdoor appetite, two urchins approached timidly from the street.

"Please, Mister," the elder said, "can me and Tim have them cherries on yander tree?"

"Get out of here, both of you," cried Janet in a gruff voice, and the hasty stampede of their bare feet was a compliment to her first assumption of masculine severity.

In the afternoon two ladies of Janet's acquaintance passed by the house and, after a critical survey as if to satisfy themselves they were not the victims of an optical delusion, one said to the other that she "guessed the Bigelow girls had concluded to paint the house at last, but she wondered that, after waiting so long, they should choose that homely shade of green instead of one of the fashionable yellows."

When the day's work was done Janet's ankles were stiff from balancing on the rounds of the ladder, and her wrist lame from the constant wielding of the brush, but, for a surface covering many square yards, the old house had assumed such a rejuvenated appearance that Janet would not have minded a whole body of aches. She felt like a stockbroker who had made a desperate deal and won.

Day succeeded day and the work went on without molestation

or interruption. Each morning the painter reappeared from somewhere, and again disappeared at nightfall. The few families left in the city for the summer were not likely to be inquisitive as regarded his coming and going. When the suspicions of the public are not aroused they can very easily be hoodwinked, and the rumor had gone forth that Janet was spending the early part of July with friends at the beach. Visitors who called left their love for her, asked when she was coming home, hoped she was having a good time, etc., until Cecilia declared that if she wasn't painting the house herself, she was breaking every commandment in the decalogue to have it done.

Meantime the weather remained singularly cool and beautiful, and Janet's courage rose rather than sank as she became inured to her work. Mrs. Bigelow, having ceased in a measure to worry about her daughter's personal safety, began to deplore Janet's increasing brown and rugged appearance, and declared she would not be able to wear a muslin dress for the remainder of the summer; but Janet philosophically explained that it was no worse for the complexion than riding a wheel or indulging in the hatless fad.

The front and one side were resplendent in a bright, new smartness, and Janet was patiently beautifying the second side, when a letter was received which threw the whole family into the wildest consternation. It was written from New York, addressed to Mrs. Bigelow, and ran thus:

> DEAR HARRIET:—
>
> My son Ned and myself have reached here on our way from the West, and in response to many urgent invitations from you in the past, are planning to spend a few days with you and your daughters as soon as we can complete arrangements to do so. Will you allow us to drop in upon you in the same unceremonious manner that was my custom when you were first married? My purpose in coming East is to acquaint my son with his relatives, and to revisit, before I leave them forever, the familiar and unforgotten places of my boyhood.
>
> Hoping you can make us welcome, I am
>
> Affectionately yours,
>
> ROBERT L. BARSTOW.

Now, Robert Barstow had been John Bigelow's chum-cousin in the days when they were boys together, but later he had gone West, married, and become a multi-millionaire.

The letter was read aloud at the tea-table and all three ladies looked at each other aghast. "Heavens!" exclaimed Janet when she found her voice. "What's to be done?"

"It's a dilemma."

"I shall tell him to come, of course," said Mrs. Bigelow. "I would like to see Robert again very much."

"But the house, Mamma!" cried both girls in chorus.

"I knew something would happen before it was done," Mrs. Bigelow said with the sententiousness of a foreboding oracle.

"If we only had some of his money," sighed Cecilia.

"He might leave you some if you made a good impression upon him," said Mrs. Bigelow.

"Mamma, do millionaires eat pork and beans, and bread and butter, and common things in general?" asked Janet, helping herself to the comestibles mentioned with the bountifulness born of an open-air appetite.

"Money can't alter one's digestion, though it may one's appetites," commented Cecilia.

"Robert was always very simple in his tastes," continued Mrs. Bigelow. "He can't have entirely changed."

"But there is the son."

"Probably a great, overgrown cowboy. Well, we will prepare for the worst, and hope for the best — the best being that these rich cousins of ours from the 'wild and woolly West' will not put in an appearance for a fortnight at least," said Janet.

But fate had evidently ordained the worst, for the following afternoon, while Janet was painting the framework of a second-story window and whistling an air from "Il Trovatore," she heard her name called in a hoarse whisper and saw Cecilia gesticulating frantically just inside the window.

"Come down from there, quick," she was saying, "for Cousin Robert and Ned are in the parlor. Aunt Angelina was taken suddenly sick with the summer cholera, so they are to make their visit here first."

Half an hour later a tall, pretty girl in a gray muslin with blue ribbons tripped down the front stairs into the parlor and was introduced to Robert Barstow and his son as "Janet." Ned Barstow, delicate and reserved, as unlike the gawky cowboy his cousins had

pictured as could well be imagined, thought her the prettiest and brightest girl he had ever seen, an impression that was strengthened every minute of the succeeding forty-eight hours, for the next day being Sunday, Janet had the privilege of reassuming her own personality.

Late Sunday night a conclave was held in Mrs. Bigelow's bedchamber as being the most remote from the guest-room, and plans of entertainment were laid whereby the Western cousins would be spirited away during the day under, as Janet suggested, Mrs. Bigelow's and Cecilia's guidance; but here a new difficulty presented itself. Mrs. Bigelow positively refused to leave the house while Janet was risking her neck on a ladder, and the sole responsibility fell upon Cecilia, despite her protestations that she was not equal to the occasion.

"I think Ned suspects something already," she said. "I saw him looking at the house all over this morning! And what a queer question to ask at the breakfast table — who was doing the work?"

"A queer question, but I answered it well when I told him 'Mr. James.' It was the name that came nearest to Janet."

"But you grew as red as a poppy when you said it."

"Simply because I have not yet reached the depth of depravity where I can fib without a blush."

Monday and Tuesday all went well, though much surprise was expressed on the part of the visitors that neither Mrs. Bigelow nor Janet was to be of the pleasure party. Both gentlemen were, however, too courteous to press the matter. When Wednesday came, Cousin Robert bolted the programme, in a very gentlemanly manner, but none the less — bolted. He would rest that day, if agreeable to his hostesses, and carry out the plan of visiting the Park and Museum on the morrow. Ned also proved that he could make plans of his own as well as his father and invited his cousins to accompany him to the beach, and would not take "no" for an answer. He gave them such a royal good time that when they reached home, exhausted from pleasure, Cecilia wished the world was full of "Cousin Neds," and Janet declared that it was much nicer to be a girl and have everything done for one.

Thursday found Cousin Robert sufficiently rested to carry out any plans that might be made for him, but his previous surprise

and that of his son grew into open astonishment when they learned that again Cecilia would be the only one to accompany them.

"Not going?" said Ned Barstow to Janet. "May I ask why?"

But Janet's only explanation was an almost inaudible murmur about a previous business engagement.

"It will not be half a day without you," he said, in a reproachful, confidential tone that made Janet redden and wonder if people, especially young men from the "wild and woolly West," were given to taking sudden and violent fancies. Just then Cecilia came downstairs looking so pretty that Janet thought Cousin Ned must be hard to satisfy if he could not be content with so fair a guide. "I can't keep this farce up much longer," Cecilia whispered, as she said good-by.

"Only for to-day," breathed Janet encouragingly. "To-morrow 'Mr. James,' like Aunt Angelina, will be taken sick."

Cecilia was not only charming in appearance but in manner also, and she made a versatile and pleasant companion as they went from place to place, covering the points of interest in the morning, dining at the Thorndyke and finding themselves at the Museum early in the afternoon. Then, to Cecilia's consternation, Ned pleaded a headache and asked her to allow him to return home alone. All the terrible consequences of such a move passed with nightmare swiftness through Cecilia's brain and she determined to keep him at all hazards. As she raised objection after objection with the thin pretext of having his welfare in view and he as readily overcame them she became desperate. Her desperation made her ridiculous.

"I am afraid to be left alone with Cousin Robert," she said.

"Indeed! Why?" queried the young man, lifting his brows.

"He might have a shock, or a stroke, or something."

"You have not seen signs of anything of the kind, have you?" demanded the young man anxiously.

"No-o"; answered Cecilia, realizing what an absurd remark she had made and blushing hotly. "No-o, but it is a warm day. The air is close and your father was sick yesterday. *Something* might happen."

"My father, as far as I know, is in perfect health. I think you have no occasion to worry, Cousin Cecilia, and if you will make

yourself comfortable here, in front of this window, you will find that, as soon as he feels any fatigue, he will seek you out and be quite willing to go. You have brought him to an exceedingly interesting place."

Cecilia realized the predicament she had put herself in, yet made one more valiant effort in Janet's behalf.

"We might all return together, and come again."

"By no means. Do not let my slight indisposition annoy or hurry you. Father is enjoying himself immensely"; and Ned glanced toward the corner where the old gentleman was engaged in an animated conversation with the curator. "You see our combined efforts could not tear him away at this present moment. I shall look for you at home later." And bowing he left her.

Janet's astonishment was unbounded when, from her vantage point on the ladder, she saw her Cousin Ned approaching from the house with a camp chair in one hand and book in the other. What did it mean? What had happened? Where was Cecilia and the Museum? Why had she had no note of warning? She grew hot and cold by turns as he came directly toward her and stood by the foot of the ladder.

"Nice day, Mr. Painter."

"Very."

Janet tried to give a masculine depth to her voice, but it only sounded hollow and sepulchral.

"You're making a slow, thorough job of this."

"I am trying fer it."

"How long have you been at it?"

"Going on two weeks."

"Do you live in the town?"

"Yes, sir."

The painter evidently did not care to enter into a protracted conversation, and Ned and his camp chair took possession of a shady place under the trees, but to Janet's annoyance, just where he could focus her should he lift his eyes from the page.

There he remained the best part of the afternoon, Janet meanwhile trying to whistle, trying to be indifferent to his gaze, trying to remember she was for the time being "Mr. James," and failing in each one. Would he never go into the house or on to the

veranda? Would the slowly descending summer sun never reach a slant where it would shine directly in his face? Why did she ever take such a herculean task or conceive such a quixotic plan? Not until Cousin Robert's and Cecilia's voices were heard coming up the front walk did he nonchalantly take his book and chair and disappear from view. No sooner was he out of sight than Janet tumbled into Cecilia's bed-chamber through a second story window, regardless of any possible scandal that might result.

Cecilia had just entered the room by the natural ingress.

"How-did-you-ever-let-him-get-away?" Janet cried throwing herself on the bed and bursting into a paroxysm of hysterical laughter and tears.

"I simply couldn't help myself," replied Cecilia, and then she gave way to her own nervous tension at the sight Janet presented curled up on the bed, a strange mixture of masculine apparel and feminine emotion, and screamed with laughter until she nearly wrecked a pillow case in her attempt to smother it.

"It's nothing to laugh at," said Janet, dolefully, yet it was so irresistible that she was obliged to join in and seized another pillow. "Another day like this and I shall have 'nervous perspiration,' as good Mrs. Donohue used to say," and she related her experiences of the afternoon.

"Do you think he suspects?" said Cecilia.

"I don't know," answered Janet, mournfully.

"He is nobody's fool," asserted Cecilia, "if he is 'woolly.'"

"That he isn't," echoed Janet, heartily.

"Anyway, get into petticoats again and make your appearance as soon as possible."

Janet tried to get the red out of her eyes by diligent washing in cold water, but only partially succeeded, and she was sure by the way Ned looked at her that he detected the bands about them. She began to think she detested this new-found cousin and resolved that she would not paint another bit under present conditions, if the "Bigelow Mansion" were never painted.

It happened that evening that a friend called for Cecilia to take a walk, another to see Mrs. Bigelow, Cousin Robert went to bed, and Ned and Janet were thus left alone in a shady corner of the porch. With the mystery that encircled her, and the suspicions

that enshrouded him, Janet had never felt so constrained in her life. She blushed and stammered at his most trifling remark, until she determined to hide her confusion in silence. This seemed to have the opposite effect on her companion, who grew more composed and talkative, told her much of his Western life and ways, referring often to incidents of his younger days when, as he expressed it, they had been "as poor as anybody."

It was after Janet had become interested in his stories and had quite forgotten the experience of the afternoon that he suddenly said, with a mixture of humorous timidity:

"Cousin Janet, will you pardon me if I take a cousinly liberty?"

Janet's suspicions returned all at once, and she stammered out:

"I don't know — of course."

"Will you allow me, then, to return this piece of property?" and he tossed Uncle Henry's false beard into her lap. Janet made her final effort at concealment.

"Mine?"

"Yes, yours, Janet Bigelow, alias Mr. James."

"Oh," was all Janet could say.

"I might as well tell you frankly that I am on to your secret, that I think you the smartest and pluckiest girl alive, and to-morrow I am going to convince you that I can paint as well as 'Mr. James' and become a partner in the business."

"Oh!" said Janet, thankful that red was white in a pale moonlight. "How did you *ever* discover?"

"If you will tell me how you happened to frighten up such a lark, I'll tell you how I found it out."

"We are awfully poor, you know," Janet began, thinking that to make a clean breast of the affair was the best way out of it. "Awfully poor," she repeated; "and the house positively had to be painted — and there was no money to pay for it — and I had plenty of time and — don't you understand?"

"I think I do," said Ned Barstow, gently, very gently, almost tenderly. "Poor, brave girl!"

"Oh, you needn't pity me," said Janet, bridling. "It was great fun until you came. If Aunt Angelina had only eaten her mushrooms later."

"I shall never cease to thank Aunt Angelina for that act. But

for that I should never have found out what sort of a girl you were. Now for my side of the story. The first night we arrived, and had been shown to our room, I was obliged to go back after coming down, to get father's spectacles. I made a mistake in the doors and got into the wrong place. I knew it was a girl's room by the pretty knick-knacks about. I have since learned it was yours, but what surprised me beyond measure was to see a suit of men's clothes over a chair, a painter's overalls and cap and a false beard and moustache on a table near. You may be sure I got out as quickly as I could, but I carried the mystery with me. Then followed the days when you did not go with us sightseeing and the painting went on, and the day when you did go and no painting was done. My suspicions having been aroused, each day's proceedings only served to strengthen them. Pardon me if I resorted to annoying measures to confirm them. Your disguise was excellent, but your hands were too small and you continued to wear the same amethyst ring you had on at breakfast. To-night, when you so hurriedly disappeared through the window —"

"And you saw that?"

"— From behind the clothes-reel — you must have dropped your beard, for I found it directly beneath, on the grass."

"And I was so upset that I never missed it!"

"Now that I know it all, you will let me help you finish. It's all in the family, you know."

"I cannot."

"Then I shall consider myself unforgiven and regret that I ever revealed my knowledge to you."

Much more was said by way of persuasion which has nothing to do with this story, except that from that day two painters instead of one worked upon the Bigelow house until finished.

This all happened three years ago, but the "Bigelow House" still looks well, though no brush has touched it since, and Janet herself, as Mrs. Edward Barstow, presides over a palatial residence in Denver.

The Last Trip of Little Betsy.*

BY HOWARD E. MORTON.

ET yo'self 'long, Miss Fannie. Ain't no use o' loafin'. Go 'long, Miss Fannie. Jes' looka Miss Jennie. She's done run clear 'way an' mos' pull her purty neck off. Go 'long, Miss Fannie, go 'long."

An old negro, with white hair that fell almost to his shoulders, sat on the high seat of a heavy mountain wagon, and after having thus delivered himself to the off leader of a twelve-mule team, relapsed into silence. Miss Fannie seemed to understand the rebuke, for she laid back her long ears, snorted resentfully and trotted along for some distance at a pace that kept her chime bells and trace chains jingling merrily. The negro smiled approvingly and gazed aimlessly up the hot, dusty road which wound and undulated among the foothills.

Black Jim, for that was the only name he had known for nearly forty years, prided himself on his ability to handle horses and mules. Many a time in his young days on the old California ranches, when some wild bronco, fresh from the range, defied every vaquero in the corral, Black Jim mounted the animal and brought it back in half an hour thoroughly tamed and tractable. His fame was known through more than one California county and for years he travelled from ranch to ranch earning a living as a horse breaker.

Finally he grew too old for so strenuous an occupation and was employed as a teamster by the big quicksilver mining company in the southern mountains of San Benito County. Jim's figure was

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familar to every one along the San Benito roads and when they saw him approaching, his bent form perched on the high seat and his silvery locks shining in the sunlight, they always raised their hats to him and wished him well. The aged negro never failed upon these occasions to take off his battered sombrero and bow profoundly in return as his team rumbled by. All the children knew him, and often he pulled up near the schoolhouses to allow a score of youngsters to climb into his massive wagon, dropping them off one at a time at their homes. Tradition went so far as to say that the horses of all the country round recognized him and nodded their heads at the sight of his black face.

On the first day of each month the quicksilver output of the New Idria mines was shipped to the metropolis. The heavy iron flasks, filled with the metallic fluid, were loaded into Black Jim's big wagon at the refinery and then Jim and his mules would clatter away through the town on a hundred-and-twenty-five-mile drive to Moss Landing, on Monterey Bay. The trip, down across the San Benito Valley and over the range of low mountains that fringes the shore of the Pacific, usually occupied five or six days, and it was necessary to take food for himself and the animals. This was packed in a small, light rig, the tongue of which was coupled to the heavier wagon with a stout chain. Jim called his smaller vehicle Little Betsy, to distinguish it from Big Betsy, which carried the quicksilver, and in it he stowed his supply of hay and grain, blankets and teamster's paraphernalia, besides enough provisions to suffice for the journey. At Moss Landing Jim would deliver the shipment to the captain of a little coasting schooner, who took it up to San Francisco.

It was on one of these monthly trips that Black Jim found it necessary to rebuke Miss Fannie for lagging behind her running mate.

Big Betsy rumbled briskly along for some miles and Little Betsy trailed behind with a merry staccato rattle. The road wound higher and higher among the mountains and the level floor of the San Benito Valley had long since disappeared behind the foothills. It was midsummer, and the sun beat down at its fiercest. There was no breeze to stir the air and the heavy adobe dust kicked up by the mules hung in a thick, choking cloud about the outfit.

Jim amused himself for a time clipping off the tops of wild flowers with the lash of his long whip, but as the heat became more and more oppressive he closed his eyes and finally drowsed.

He was awakened suddenly from his nap by a snort from the leaders, followed by the crisp command:

"Hands up!"

Jim rubbed his eyes stupidly and stared ahead through the cloud of dust. The wheel mules were humped up in their breeching, with the rest of the team backed in against them confusedly. The leaders were kicking and squealing. Again the voice said sharply:

"Hands up!" And as the dust cleared away, a man with a double-barrelled shotgun at his shoulder gradually took shape at the side of the road.

"Dey's up, dey's up! Put down de gun, fo' de Lord's sake! Dey's up!" Two dark brown palms were raised skyward. The man lowered the gun and looked searchingly into the ebony face.

The man was tall and roughly dressed and his features were masked by a thick, matted black beard that covered the face almost to the points of the cheek bones. Another man, shorter than the first, swarthy like an Indian, and hideous from the loss of an eye, emerged from behind the leaders' heads and the two held a whispered consultation. Jim sat on the high seat with upraised hands watching them covertly, his small eyes still blinking. The men conversed for a few moments and then the one with the gun advanced and propped up his foot on the spokes of the fore wheel.

"Look here — you," he said savagely, his fingers playing with the trigger of the weapon that lay across his knee. "Kin you drive this here outfit over Tucker's Cut in the dark?"

Jim looked down at the shotgun and then at the one-eyed man, whose single orb glared at him ominously from under the dirty remnant of a Mexican sombrero.

"I ain't gone an' train dese yere mules fo' nothin'," was the enigmatical reply. The man below made a gesture of satisfaction.

"Well, that's what we want. Let's come to business. We've got a schooner at Goodall's old landing, 'bout ten miles above Moss. This here load of quicksilver is worth 'bout ten thousand dollars to us an' we're goin' to have it. Now, there'll be five

hundred dollars in yer pocket if you haul it safe to the landing. You git yer money when we git the stuff aboard. Stand in on this deal an' you kin go back an' tell 'em you wuz held up, or any old thing. We'll be on the way to Mexico — we won't care. If you won't stand in — well — "

He patted the stock of the gun significantly and glanced at his companion, whose visage distorted itself into a horrible grin. Jim took off his hat and nervously mopped his head with a red bandana handkerchief.

"Well, what d'you say? Are you goin' to stand in an' make the five hundred, er are we goin' to throw yer corpse under the bridge an' take the team ourselves?" He impatiently jerked his thumb toward a little stream crossing the road a hundred yards ahead.

"Ef Miss Fannie an' Miss Jennie goes ober de cut, ole Jim goes too." He paused a moment and looked at the two men expressively. "I reckon de five hunderd bucks doan' grow on many ob de trees roun' yere, so ole Jim's goin' to make hay 'fer shore while de sun shines."

He smiled broadly, and in spite of the mixed metaphor involved the two seemed to understand him perfectly.

"That's the business," affirmed the man with the gun. "We don't want to have no shootin' or nothin' like that in this job. Do we, Joe?"

Again the horrible grimace spread over the face of the man with one eye. He shook his head by way of answer, clambered into Little Betsy and stretched out at full length on the sacks of grain. The other man followed and seated himself on the pile of hay, the shotgun resting across his lap.

"Now go ahead," he commanded. Jim whistled to the leaders and the outfit moved forward once again with the jingle of trace chains and hame bells and the rumble and rattle of the tandem wagons.

It was almost dusk when they reached the point where Tucker's Cut branched off from the main road. This cut was a short route over the mountains to Goodall's Landing and was little used because of the heavy grades and poor condition of the roadbed, which in some places was even dangerous. A stream crossed the

road here and Jim got down to water the animals before the long ascent. The man with the gun had been nodding, but as the teams came to a standstill he woke up with a start and gripped his weapon alertly. After the thirst of the animals was satisfied Jim looked over the harness and spent considerable time adjusting the couplings which bound Little Betsy to her ponderous sister. Joe slept soundly on the grain sacks, the empty socket where his eye once had been staring upward into the gathering gloom.

Again the bells and chains jingled and the team began the climb of the cut. The road became rougher and wound in and out along the sides of a steep ravine. It was almost dark now, but the leaders picked the way, avoiding washouts and other obstructions with marvellous sagacity. Above them the black shadow of the mountain side sloped upward to the stars. On the other side, so near sometimes that the outer wheels crumbled the edge, yawned a steep cañon. Along the bottom, several hundred feet below, a small stream flowed over a bed of stones and boulders.

Several times Jim looked furtively back over his shoulder at the two men in the rear wagon. Joe lay outstretched on the sacks, slumbering heavily. The man with the gun sat on the hay, his chin drooped forward on his breast and his head swaying from side to side, as the wheels bumped over the ruts and stones in their path. He, too, was sound asleep. Jim peered through the darkness for some time at the limp figure, then stooped and quietly wound the jerk line around a cleat on the footboard. The mules remembered their training and continued their steady pull up the grade. Noiselessly the negro climbed down from the high seat and crawled over the iron flasks to the rear of Big Betsy. Here he paused and listened intently. He could hear the heavy breathing of the two men only a few feet away. In a moment he slipped over the end of the heavy vehicle and, clinging with one hand to the tailboard, deftly unwound the chain that fastened the tongue of the smaller wagon in place. Again he looked back into the darkness and listened. He could see the faint outline of the man sitting upright and back of that the dark figure on the sacks. With a quick tug he loosed the last loop of the chain and shoved the tongue backward and outward with all the strength in his black arm.

Little Betsy hovered for an instant on the edge of the descent and then with a creak toppled over into the cañon. An awful shriek came up through the darkness, and then the air was filled with the sound of breaking wood and metal as the mass shot, end over end, down the rocky declivity. A miniature avalanche of stones and dirt rattled down into the creek bed, and the surrounding mountains and ravines sent back an echo of that blood-curdling human cry. Then all was silent.

The mules stopped, trembling in their tracks. Black Jim slowly mounted to the high seat and mopped his forehead with the red bandana.

"I reckon old Jim ain't goin' ter get hung fo' doin' his duty by de boss," he murmured reflectively as he glanced down into the blackness of the cañon. The jerk line whisked sharply, the hame bells and trace chains jingled and Big Betsy moved up the grade again into the night.

A Bride in Ultimate.*

BY DON MARK LEMON.

"IN God's name, sign the passport and let me go!"

"Pardon, Monsieur; my signature will not make good the passport. Monsieur must a new passport obtain from his legate."

"A new one! It will take hours — days — to do that, and *he* will be out of my reach by morning."

"Monsieur, it is the law."

"The law! Shall this man be allowed to rob me of my dearest possession, while the law binds me here hand and foot? Must I delay for a needless sheet of paper while every minute takes him nearer the sea coast and farther from me? Can't you see my cause is honest? Can't you understand that I am no fugitive — that I want only to come up with this man? That he has robbed me, and these formalities that help to cover his flight are an outrage against justice!"

"Pardon, Monsieur; if the gentleman has robbed you, it is best for you to wait here and let the law — the officials, Monsieur — seek him."

"The law again!"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"Then I have lost her forever!" The traveller, who for some ten minutes had been pleading with the courteous official to honor his expired passport and allow him to cross from France into Spain, sank down upon a chair in the private quarters of the French railway station and buried his face in his hands.

"Lost *her*, Monsieur?" the official questioned, with a new show of interest. "Is it a lady?"

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"Yes!" the other groaned. "He has robbed me of my wife!"

"And the lady?"

"Is with him."

"Pardon again, Monsieur; the gentleman you seek journeyed alone. Ah, Monsieur is mistaken! He need not despair! Take courage! The gentleman journeyed alone!"

"No, I say. She is with him — and as helpless as the dead."

"Monsieur!"

"I say, yes — she is with him."

"In spirit, Monsieur?"

"In body."

"Will Monsieur explain to the officials how the gentleman has robbed him of his wife? We have the telegraph and may the gentleman detain before he reaches the sea coast. But if Monsieur will listen, he will learn how the gentleman was not accompanied by a lady, nor by a servant attended."

"The lady is dead!" came the amazing reply.

"Dead, Monsieur!" exclaimed the official. "Ah!" A doubt as to the other's sanity seemed to strike the Frenchman and he looked about uneasily. "Will Monsieur read to pass the time?" he questioned.

"Read!" The American traveller laughed an unpleasant laugh. Then his smothered impatience broke out. "Can't I follow him on foot without a passport?"

"No, Monsieur; not into territory Spanish."

"May death stop him then!" the other cried with uplifted hands.

The Frenchman's suspicions deepened; but, courteous even to a madman, he only begged the other to have patience.

"Yes, I know that you think I rave," the American broke in, passionately; "and you would think me mad if I told you the whole truth. Yet I say he has robbed me of my wife and she is with him in person. You, yourself, saw her."

"Pardon, Monsieur; I saw her not."

"Did he not wear a great diamond upon his hand?"

"Monsieur is right."

"Then — "

"It was a pool of light, Monsieur," continued the Frenchman.

"Ah, it is Monsieur's jewel, and so lovely that he calls it his wife!"

"It *is* my wife!" came the amazing reply.

For a moment the other was wholly nonplussed. Then he questioned: "Has Monsieur wedded a jewel?"

"No — I have wedded no jewel. That stone, I say, is no jewel; it is a woman — my wife — flesh and blood! Ah, honor the passport and let me go! I swear to you I am no fugitive — I swear to you I will do this man no harm. It is the ring I want, and, when I have it again, you shall see for yourself that I speak the truth; you shall see this diamond — the strangest and loveliest thing in the wide world." The face of the American bespoke sincerity, though his words seemed sheer raving.

"There is the telegraph, Monsieur, and the officials. Let Monsieur have the gentleman detained."

"I fear to act so," the other answered. "This diamond might tempt some high Spanish official, or the King of Spain himself."

The Frenchman expostulated.

"I mean it — every word. Has it not tempted my dearest friend to rob me? No, no! I must follow him and get the jewel back without any learning of its lovely nature."

"But I, Monsieur?" the other questioned, with a bow.

"I can trust in you," replied the American, politely.

"Ah!" The official glowed with the high compliment.

"But what is to be done?"

"Monsieur, let me think." The Frenchman began to pace back and forth the length of his private quarters, now tugging nervously at his beard, now excitedly gesticulating to himself. "Ah, Monsieur!" he finally exclaimed, coming to a standstill before the American; "the next train comes not till morning; you must a new passport obtain; it will take — I cannot tell Monsieur how many hours. I despair!"

A groan arose to the lips of the American, but was stifled by the sudden clanging of a bell, a hiss of escaping steam and the rumble of car wheels without. Both men rushed to the door and out upon the platform. An engine with three passenger coaches attached drew into the station from the wrong direction and contrary to official time. What was wrong? The men were soon to learn.

Two coaches from the rear of the train which had drawn out of the station about half an hour before had broken from their couplings and been wrecked and, a high French official being among the number injured, the engineer had reversed his engine and returned for surgical aid into French territory.

Despite the tragic nature of this return, the American gave a cry of joy and began searching among the passengers for the fugitive — the false friend who had robbed him of his ring.

That friend was not to be found among the living, nor among the injured, and four of the five dead had already been removed from the rear coach to the station! Would the fifth and last corpse be that of the fugitive?

Brushing by the porters, the American leapt to where the fifth dead body lay, crushed and mangled past recognition save by its clothing, and — yes, the great white Polar Star-like diamond that flamed upon a finger of its bloodless hand!

Tearing the splendid jewel away, the American brought it passionately to his lips and murmured: "Darling, look up! *I* am here!"

. . . . . .

"Will Monsieur show me the ring?" the French station official questioned, when again in his private quarters alone with the American.

The latter drew the jewel from his breast and handed it with a powerful magnifying glass to the Frenchman. "Look at the heart of the stone through the glass," he said, softly.

The official did as he was bidden and a cry of astonishment escaped him.

"Monsieur, it is divine!"

"Divine! It is the work of God himself! Is not *He* an artist?"

The Frenchman turned again to the diamond in the ring and for fully five minutes gave it his unbroken attention, scarcely breathing, as if he trembled to dim for a moment the magnifying glass or the limpid gem beneath. And well might the jewel hold his gaze, for in the heart of the perfect forty-carat stone, attired in simple Grecian costume, with a red rose in the dark hair, lay in repose the minute, exquisite figure of a woman. The human eyes were half veiled, the lips lightly parted with a smile, the cheeks taking

their color it seemed from the rose twined low in the dark hair, and the forehead and breast like glowing ivory. The lovely face, too, caught an added loveliness from its exquisite minuteness, and the contour of the perfectly formed body and limbs showed life-like through the delicate apparel.

And now, as the hand that held the stone trembled, and rich purple and orange lights played over the surface of the diamond, or, stabbing deeper, bathed those delicate limbs in prismatic fire, it seemed indeed that the Ideal had wrought a perfect work.

"Monsieur, she?"

"Is human."

"Ah!"

"Yes — and once a divine and stately woman."

"Monsieur, how?"

"She was my bride, and, as she reclined one day within a large artificial crystal, diamond-shaped — we were rehearsing for an entertainment in which she was to appear as the spirit of the diamond — as she reclined in the attitude which she now keeps, somehow — I don't know exactly how, but I think that the crystal in which she was imprisoned had been made of an unknown sand with some strange inherent quality — somehow a bolt of lightning leapt out of the clear sky, that mysterious crystal seemed to draw down upon itself all the electricity in heaven, and when I found my sight again this diamond lay at my feet."

"And, Monsieur, *this* is your bride?"

"Yes, yes!" A great passion shook the speaker and his voice broke painfully. "The force of the lightning compressed that crystal and her sweet body into what you see — into ultimate form."

Once more the Frenchman gazed for a while into the heart of the lovely stone, then, holding the ring tenderly in the hollow of his hand, returned it to the American.

"Monsieur, it is a jewel for a deity."

The other made no immediate reply, but stood looking upon the exquisite form in the diamond as a lover looks into the face of his beloved. Finally, he said: "She is not dead to me, and while I thus have her with me I care not what I suffer."

He took the ring from the hollow of his hand and was about to place it upon his finger — the diamond inward — when the lovely

jewel slipped from his hold and fell to the floor. As it came in contact with the hard tiles, there was a slight explosive sound and a shower of minute scintillating particles seemed to burst from the ring itself and scatter like dust on the air.

With a cry of horror, the American stooped and snatched up the ring. *The diamond was gone utterly from its setting!*

That lovely figure in the heart of the stone had been a centre of weakness, like a carbon spot in a natural diamond, and, upon coming into sharp contact with the flooring, the stone had exploded, exactly as a Prince Rupert's drop does when the end is broken away.

"My God!"

The words were a shriek, and the American staggered back against the wall, his face drawn with unspeakable agony.

"Monsieur! Monsieur! Monsieur!"

The American's right hand made a quick backward movement.

"She never died till now!" he cried. "Oh, my God!"

There was a glint of steel, a sharp report, and, as the Frenchman rushed forward, the other pitched headlong to his feet, *dead!*

To the Man it Most Concerns.

BY IRENE GARDNER.

THERE is one man in the world for whom I have a message. I have never seen him, nor does he know of my existence. But, by telling an incident that came into my life, I hope to bring to his notice an explanation that is of vital moment to him. And, so strange a world is this, it may chance that the first to read the story I am about to tell may be the man it most concerns.

When twenty-three years of age I became engaged to a man whose position was not sufficiently established to justify immediate marriage, and by mutual consent we settled down to a long engagement. But at the end of two years we had a misunderstanding. There was bitter feeling on both sides. My engagement ring was a beautifully wrought band of gold with strange characters within which, being interpreted, read, "United, I symbolize love; separated, I symbolize hate." This ring my lover had bought from an old man who had been one of his father's tenants. The man, who was of Oriental origin, stated that it had been given to his people generations before, as a reward from a king whose ancestors had taken it from a captive prince. It had been used between the different tribes of an ancient nation as a symbol of peace if sent to a tribe unbroken; as a declaration of war if sent separated. It was a marvellously fashioned bit of gold, large enough for the little finger of a man or the engagement finger of a woman. On the outside of the ring above the word *hate* was a tiny dark stone, almost black and very dull; opposite the word *love* was set a small pearl of wondrous purity. By pressing delicately, yet firmly, on the little black

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stone, the ring would part into two sections, and it was only by holding the two parts together and pressing on the pearl that they would again unite.

As my lover turned to leave me on the night of our quarrel, I pressed my finger on the dark stone and the ring fell apart in my hand. "Take it," I said, and I held it out to him.

He took the little pieces of gold and, as he looked at them, his anger softened. He would even then have become reconciled. But I was hard, for anger burned deep in my heart. He plead with me. I was obdurate. Then he took the half of the ring in which was set the pearl and put it in my hand.

"Alice," said he, "if you ever send me that bit of gold I'll come to you, if I have to cross seven seas."

Then he left me. I put the piece of ring in the soft cotton of a jeweller's box, which I put in the back of a little drawer in my desk, and took up the routine of my life.

I shall not dwell on the years that followed, each bringing experiences that taught me wisdom and a certain quiet poise, and also showed me more fully the value of what I had lost. I felt that I should never again give my heart to any man, although some there were who sought it. My lover had long since left the city, spending much of his time abroad in the interest of his business, which had become a large concern, with branches in many countries. For a time I heard of him through mutual friends and then even they ceased to speak of him.

Nine years passed and found me still living in the home of my childhood. My mother had died, my brother had long since married, and my father and I lived alone in the big old house with a few faithful servants. We lived in a stately neighborhood, exclusive, old-fashioned and often deadly dull. I had grown to care nothing for society; I was not much given to formal charitable work, so I lived with my books and a few chosen friends. It was not a broad life, and the night of the 17th of January, 1891, found me sitting before the fire in the library, not caring to read, meditative and strangely sad. It was the anniversary of the night I had sent my lover away, and I knew that when I went up to my room I would take the little box from out the drawer and cry over the piece of gold within. And I knew full well that my heart longed

to send to the only man I had ever loved my token of reconciliation. But, although I had heard that he had not married, for aught I knew the pledge given me so many years before might have become as naught to him. He had travelled much and there are many lovely women in every land. These thoughts dwelt with me as I sat before the fire. My father, according to his habit, had gone early to bed. I heard Sarah, the cook, closing the house. She came to the door of the library.

"Shall I lock the outside doors, Miss Alice?"

"No, I'll see to things here," I answered, absently.

"It's a terrible night, Miss Alice."

"Yes, Sarah."

And it was a terrible night. A roaring wind blew in terrific gusts around the house. The sleet dashed fiercely against the windows. The mighty voice of the storm without made the house within seem strangely quiet. Sitting long before the fire, I grew lost in brooding thoughts and almost unconscious of my surroundings. Suddenly the clear, sharp ring of the electric bell sounded through the house. I sprang from my chair, with a startled exclamation. I glanced at the clock. It was half-past ten. Now, I am not a brave woman. I have always dreaded the dark and been terribly afraid of burglars, so when I saw the hands of the clock I gasped with dismay. Again the bell rang and some one stepped into the vestibule. I thought of my feeble father; of the two timid women asleep on the third floor; of the coachman in his room over the carriage house. I stood breathless. Then I did what I had always said I would never do under such circumstances. I opened the door into the vestibule.

As I did so a great gust of wind swept past me. I heard the two outer doors blow wide open; then close with a bang. I threw my arm before my face as if to ward off a blow, and, throwing all my weight against the door, closed it with sudden force. As I leaned against it a moment, dazed, I raised my eyes and my heart seemed to give one bound to my throat. A man stood near me. I tried to scream, but no sound came. I stood motionless, all sensations merged in terror. The man stepped toward me and took off his hat.

As I glanced at him all my dormant faculties seemed, for an

instant, to leap into life. Then there was a rushing sound in my ears; the floor seemed to undulate; I felt myself caught in strong arms, and a mistiness came over the lights, through which I saw, dimly, the face of my lover.

When I came to myself I was lying on the divan in the library. My lover's arms were close about me; he was covering my face with kisses. I wanted to throw my arms around his neck, but I felt too weak to move. I was awed by the sudden happiness that had come to me — it all seemed a dream.

"Alice, Alice! dear one, I did not mean to frighten you. The train was late and I could not get here at the time you set." His voice sounded far away and I only half took in his words.

"Did you come back because you loved me?" I whispered.

"Love you? Sweetheart, my love has grown deeper each year since last I saw you. Nine years I have waited for that message. Ah, Alice! how could you wait so long before you sent it?"

I looked at him blankly. "What message?" I asked, faintly.

He smiled down at me and smoothed my hair. "My coming so late has dazed you, dear. When I saw the lights in the house I thought you were still expecting me and so I rang the bell."

Surprise seemed to paralyze my brain. Surely I was dreaming. "I did not know," I gasped; "I did not know that you were coming."

"Because you did not hear from me? I should have called you, Alice, but I wanted my first word to you to come from my lips. I took the first steamer after getting your message. But how did you know I was in London? I was most unexpectedly detained there and had not been in the city two hours. How did the boy know where to find me?"

My brain seemed to refuse to act. "What boy? What message?" I asked in a dazed tone.

"The message you sent me with the half of the ring. Alice, dear, look at me. Surely you remember sending me the half of the ring."

"The ring!" I exclaimed. "The ring! I did not send it."

He stared at me a moment, then laughed. "You are not yet fully conscious, Alice. In a moment you will remember."

Then a great fear seized me with such force that my brain

cleared and strength came back to my body. There had flashed into my mind the thought that he was insane. I sat up and looked at him. He had risen and was standing by my side. Laying my hand on his arm I spoke to him gently.

"There is some mistake. I did not send you my part of the ring; I have it upstairs."

He looked at me, dumb. Twice he started to speak, then stopped. Gradually his manner changed from tenderness to severity. After a moment he threw off his overcoat, took from the pocket of his vest a little box, opened it — and there lay the half of the ring in which was set the pearl.

As I looked at it I began to tremble. I touched it with my finger, for I could not believe my eyes. "It cannot be," I murmured. "Indeed it cannot be. I did not send it. Tell me, how did you get it?"

He seemed to have become almost a stranger, so changed was his manner. When he spoke it was concisely and with no emotion.

"I was on my way from Glasgow to Paris, and was unexpectedly detained in London. It was about nine o'clock when I reached my hotel, and I had been in my room but a short time when there was a knock on the door. I opened it and a boy handed me a little package, saying, 'I was instructed to give this to you, sir,' and was gone before I could say anything. There was no address on the package and I opened it feeling certain I would find it was not for me. Can you not imagine my feelings when I saw this little box and in it the half of the ring I left with you nine years ago to-night? Wrapped about the gold was a piece of paper on which was written, 'Come to me on the night of the 17th of January at eight o'clock.' I have come, and now you say you did not send me this half of the ring. There is none other in the world like it. What have you done that it should reach me and yet you know nothing of it?"

I pressed my hands to my head. "Oh," I cried, distractedly, "I have done nothing. I do not understand! But let me see."

Saying no more I rushed from the library and ran swiftly up the stairs to my room. As I entered, the sudden darkness confused me. I groped blindly for the matches, fell over a chair, found myself up against a window, and was on the point of bursting into

tears when I felt my hand on the matchbox. In a moment the room was flooded with light. I turned to my desk and with trembling fingers opened the small drawer. I felt in the back and drew out the little white box. Holding my breath I took off the cover. There on its bed of cotton lay the half of the ring.

I was excited to a point of absolute calmness. Walking slowly, I went down the stairs clinging to the banister, for my knees felt strangely weak. I felt I must be composed in order to make the surprise of my discovery less violent to him. I pushed aside the hangings into the library, walked up to the man within and handed him the bit of gold. Then he did not do in the least what I had expected. He looked closely at the two pieces of gold in his hand — started in surprise — threw them carelessly on the table and, walking over to the mantel, stood leaning on it and looked moodily into the fire. As he did not speak I walked over to his side.

"Why do you take it this way? Surely this mystery can be explained. There is no harm done."

He turned on me fiercely. "Of course not! No harm done! It is nothing that I have come here when you did not expect me and undoubtedly did not want me. Oh, no, there is no harm done! But I see it all now. Your terror when you saw me — your swoon — and do you know you have spoken no word of greeting to me? As for a word of love — my God! I do not know — you may even now be married!"

I walked over to the table and took up one of the half circles of gold. "Have you the rest of the ring?" I asked, quietly.

He took a leather case from his pocket and handed it to me. I opened it and flushed as I saw a miniature of myself mounted in the cover. Lying on its bed of white satin was the little piece of gold that meant so much. I took it out, held it against the other part in my hand, the severed edges meeting, pressed on the pearl, and the ring became again a gleaming band of gold.

"Herbert," I asked, "will you put it on my finger?" and I knew that the love of my whole heart shone in my eyes.

. . . . . .

I do not think a happier couple ever stepped on board an Atlantic liner than were we when, three months later, we started on our

wedding journey, which was to be a summer in Europe. The details of that delightful trip have no interest to outsiders, with the exception of an incident that occurred in Lucerne. We were lunching one day at our quiet and small hotel, eating with that lazy ease of which Americans seem incapable when at home. At a table near us sat two women, one a regal-looking matron of about sixty, the other a girl of perhaps twenty-five and the most beautiful creature I had ever beheld. Now, I am not considered by any means plain, but as I looked at that girl's glorious dark beauty I felt myself dwindling into pale, ordinary commonplace. Yet it was a face of almost tragic sadness.

Herbert leaned toward me, ostensibly to pass the salt. "Do you think she is a princess?" he asked, in an undertone.

"Yes, and betrothed to a king," I answered. Well, we tried to be polite and not stare at her and I think we succeeded fairly well. Nor was our good breeding long put to a test, for they soon rose to leave. As they passed us the girl's light summer wrap brushed against me and the lace fluttering on its border caught on the prongs of a fork which lay near the edge of the table. She made no exclamation as she felt the slight jerk, but calmly turned to see the cause. The fork was near me at my left and I instinctively put my left hand over it to keep it from being pulled off the table. As she turned and glanced down the girl gave a faint scream. Herbert had sprung to assist her, but she ignored him. She grasped my arm and stared at me in horror, amazement, anger. She seemed suddenly to have taken fire.

"Where did you get it? Tell me, quick, where did you get it? You have seen him. Where is he? Oh, how could he give it to you? Tell me!" She caught her breath sharply and, sinking into a chair, burst into a passion of tears. Her companion had stood in silent astonishment and only found voice to ask incoherently what it all meant.

"The ring!" gasped the girl. "The ring! She has it!"

I shall never again say that men are lacking in tact. I do not know how he did it, but before I had in the least regained my self-possession, Herbert had us all out of the room and away from the staring few who were in it. He hurried us through a hall to a small room, into which we were almost pushed. I had a vague

sense of seeing a waiter disappear and the door close. We were alone. The girl was almost hysterical and the older woman was vainly trying to quiet her. As for myself, I was too excited to speak.

Herbert calmly seated us all, leading the sobbing girl to the easiest chair and then, seating himself beside her, without asking a question, began to tell her the story of our ring. The girl caught her breath to listen. Her sobs grew less frequent, then ceased altogether, and when he had finished she sat looking at him with staring eyes and parted lips. Then she sprang up and seized the regal looking woman by the shoulders.

"He never received it. He never received it. Why, of course he did not come, because he never received it. But oh, he must think me faithless to him. And I loved him so. But I'll find him. I'll find him and he shall know."

She swayed, and Herbert caught her and seated her again. She did not faint, but trembled, laughed a little, her beautiful face glowing with sudden hope and then clouding with fear and grief. As she sat there, she was a woman to turn any man's head. Gradually she became quiet and then we heard her story and the mystery of the ring was explained and proved to be one of those strange coincidences that occur in life perhaps oftener than we know.

The details of the story she told I cannot repeat, for to do so would be to betray a confidence. But this much I can say: The girl was the only daughter of an old English family — the stately woman, her aunt. There had entered into her life a tragic love story which, when I heard it, made my own experience seem almost without interest. There is but one man in the world who knows the whole of that story and that is the man who was her lover. If it is ever told he must tell it. The original of the ancient ring I wore (for there were two) had been in this man's family for countless generations and we could only come to the conclusion that, in some early time, a cunning goldsmith had seen the ring and skilfully fashioned one like it which he had sold to some one as the original. It had probably been sold and resold until it finally reached this country. This is the only way we have ever been able to explain the duplication of the rings, and it seems a plausi-

ble solution of the mystery. Through the stupid mistake of a boy who had delivered a package to the man in room 314 instead of 214 of the Hotel Cecil, a flood of happiness had come into two lives while over two others impenetrable darkness had fallen. While the delivery of that bit of gold to Herbert brought me a great joy, its non-delivery to another man brought upon an innocent girl a suspicion of treachery, dishonor, faithlessness — who knows all the man has thought? A Russian prince, an exile from his country, shattered in fortune, pursued by political enemies, yet through it all a courageous man, there had come to him the repeated assertion that the woman he loved was false to him and even planning his further downfall that she might more easily free herself from him. He had demanded of her that, if she still loved him, she should send him the half of the ring he had given her when they separated. Not as a symbol of hate was the ring divided between them, but that it might be a token one could send the other when needful. The girl, pressed on all sides to renounce her lover, had, upon receiving his message, asserted her right to love the man of her choice. She had sent the token at the time and to the place he had directed and then had waited for him to come to her on the night she had set. But he did not come nor send a message. From that time no trace of him had ever been found. He had left the hotel on the morning after the delivery of her message and gone out into oblivion.

The girl's story was told, and we sat in awed silence, overcome by the sadness of it.

"Oh," said she, "how slight a thing, how slight a thing can turn the current of our lives. I have always feared that the package did not reach him. I did not address it, because it was too small, but I gave the boy a card with the address written on it. He must have lost the card and thought he remembered the number of the room and could reach the right man in that way. He described the man to me as well as he could remember, and the description did not differ too materially."

She turned to Herbert. "You do not look like him, but your height and coloring and build are very similar. Ah!" she cried, "to think he did not get it! I would rather he had been false to me than to have him think I had been faithless to him"

She rose and stood among us, her face transfigured. "But I will find him. I will find him and he shall know the truth."

. . . . . .

Ten years have passed since that day. I have received many letters from my English friend. Year after year she has watched for some news of her lover. She spent large sums of money in trying to find him. But in vain. That he did not commit suicide she was certain. His was too strong a character for that. It was possible that he had died, but the belief in his living presence haunted her. A few weeks ago she died. Her life had not been one of selfish grief and useless sorrow. The day she died I received a letter from her — the last she ever wrote. In it she said, "Oh, that I might vindicate myself to him. I would do it before all the world."

That letter seems to me now like a message from the dead. And of late there has come to me the hope that, by telling the story of my ring, I might be able to bring to the eyes of the man it most concerns the vindication of one whose loyalty never faltered, and whose glorious heart was true to him to the end.

At the Bottom of the Sea.*

BY GORDON ARTHERTON.

N June, 1892, the United States steamship *Visitor* sank on a reef off the southern coast of Florida with all on board. Half of the passengers were saved by efforts directed from land, and the bodies of half the remainder were found. But one-fourth of the people of the *Visitor* lay, undiscovered and unburied, in the waters of the Gulf.

A few days later divers were sent down with a view of raising the steamship if she were found to be in good enough condition. Among these divers was one Joel Vaughton, a hardy, worn veteran with the scars of the Civil War on his body and the signs of toil and hardship on his rough, honest face. Vaughton was forty-five — possibly a bit over. He did not know, but he remembered enlisting in '63 as sixteen years of age. He had not brilliantly distinguished himself in the war — as so many luckier ones had — but he had fought hard and well. No opportunities had been given him of leading a desperate charge or of capturing an enemy's flag. He had been twice wounded, at Bull Run and at Gettysburg. The surgeons had decided the last time that he was to die, and they had given him up. But he had determined to live, and live he did. He was discharged from the hospital just in time to join Sherman in his march to the sea. After the war he drifted around doing nothing, and yet doing everything. There was no occupation that he did not try his hand at, and there was none that he tried longer than a week. Finally he drifted south, and in '82 started farming on a small scale. This evidently proved the exception to the rule, and he stuck to it for seven years, making a modest income thereby. But it was too monotonous for him. He lacked the excitement which hitherto had never failed him, and in '89 he discovered the work that

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suited him. He became a diver. He was well fitted for it physically, with his sound heart and his good lungs, and he made a success of it almost immediately.

Three days after the *Visitor* had sunk, Joel Vaughton and one of his comrades were fitted into their suits and lowered down to the wreck. Vaughton had long ago got over the singing in his ears and the sickness that is first incurred by divers, and he was steady as a rock when he was lowered cautiously on his rope. Looking down he saw the deck of the *Visitor* looming up beneath him. Already it was covered with weeds and green with slime. As his feet touched the boards he gave the signal to stop lowering, and, slowly and cautiously, made his way to the forward hatchway, taking care to lay his rope and supply-pipe in such a fashion that they might not become entangled in the stray wreckage, of which there was a great quantity.

His inspection of the forward part of the ship showed him that it was in no condition to be raised. The bow had been shattered by the contact with the reef, and the grinding had worn away the entire plankings of the forward decks. He returned slowly to the stern of the vessel and climbed over the remains of the rail down on to the sandy bottom. Then he walked along the stern of the ship, keeping a sharp lookout for any damage done in that direction.

As he did so he beheld a sight that, cool veteran as he was, caused him to utter a cry and to step quickly backwards. Staring at him through the porthole, his face livid and sunken, his eyes bloodshot, but gleaming with excitement, his hair matted over his forehead and his lips moving in what must have been outcries or entreaties, was a living, breathing man. Vaughton, at first, thought that his senses had left him, and he turned away to see if the apparition would have gone when he next looked around. But no — the pale, excited face was still there, and this time the hand was beckoning wildly to him and the eyes supplementing the movements. Then, as soon as he realized that he had attracted Vaughton's attention, the man disappeared, only to show himself again with a sheet of paper covered with writing. This he held up against the porthole, motioning Vaughton to approach and read it. It ran as follows :

HELP!!!
When the ship sank I went down with it, locked up in this water-tight compartment. Have had hardly anything to eat, and the air is giving out. I cannot last an hour more. If you open the door, however, I shall be destroyed by the water which will rush in.
FOR PITY'S SAKE, HELP ME SOME WAY!!
I AM STARVING FOR FOOD AND AIR!

The words were written in a fairly legible hand, and Vaughton had no trouble in making them out. But the question was, what to do. How should he save this man? There seemed to be no means of doing it, unless the entire ship were raised, and this, as he had seen by his inspection, was impossible. Then, suddenly, another plan flashed through his brain — a plan that was, really, the first thing that should have occurred to him. Why couldn't the man trust to his chances of reaching the surface before his breath gave out? He, himself, could take down a rope and tie it around his body while the men above hauled him up by it as quickly as they could.

Vaughton motioned to the man, who had been gazing anxiously at him, and, nodding to assure him of his assistance, gave the signal to be hauled up. As soon as he was above the surface and had been stripped of his helmet, he told the men, as briefly and as quickly as he could, the strange sight that he had seen. A long rope was secured and Vaughton wrote out his plan on a piece of cardboard, so that the man might understand exactly what was to be done.

Then he dived down a second time, taking with him the extra rope. He found the man occupying the position he had left him in, only staring upwards, watching for the help that he knew was to come from above. Vaughton held the sheet of cardboard close up to the porthole, and, as the man within read, his face lightened up in comprehension. Then, upon a signal from Vaughton, the prisoner threw open the door of the compartment, and, quick as a thought, was bound around the waist with the rope. The sign was given to the waiting men above, and he was hauled up as fast as human sinews could do it.

The stranger reached the surface in an unconscious state, but was soon revived, and, after having eaten all the sandwiches that were to be procured, he showed great willingness to tell his remarkable story.

"I was sleeping," he said, "at the time the ship foundered, and it was by a miracle that the door of the water-tight compartment was closed, else I would not be here to tell the tale. You may wonder at the fact that I slept so soundly that the hurry and confusion on the decks did not awaken me. I will answer that simply by telling you that I regularly roll off my bed at night and never wake up. When I *did* wake up, however, imagine my astonishment, upon glancing out of my porthole, to find that I was entirely surrounded by water — water to left of me, in front of me, above me, and to right of me. At first, as you may surmise, I could not realize what had happened. Then, gradually, it dawned on me that I was at the bottom of the sea. This idea was immediately strengthened by the sight of a couple of lazy fish, swimming up and down in front of my porthole. I believe that no one has, hitherto, equalled my adventure. No human being that I have ever heard of has lived for two days, clad in his ordinary costume, at the bottom of the ocean, except, of course, in a submarine boat. Well, to continue: About the second day I realized that my supply of air was giving out — the compartment was not very large — and I became oppressed in breathing. It was lucky that I was the only one down there to use up the air. Finally, it occurred to me that divers might be sent down to the ship, and I prepared the sign that I showed at the porthole. If it had not been for your timely assistance, I should have been a dead man by this time."

Bracers For Topers

A Coffee Toper needs a bracer in the morning, a cup of coffee to steady him or her. Why?

Coffee is not so strong a stimulant as liquor, but is still an alkaloid stimulant, and so long as it is used, the nerves will go shaky and the bracers be needed, and disease of some sort will surely set in. The older one is, the harder it is to break away from coffee.

It is easy to quit the coffee habit by shifting to Postum,—easy and wonderfully healthful.

Neither Brain nor Body can work properly when the nerves are shaky and the body sick.

The coffee lover can have his or her coffee and be well, happy and strong if that coffee is Postum.

There is a reason.

POSTUM

CEREAL FOOD COFFEE

It's Wrong to Stay Sick

Here is the utmost that medicine can do.
I know it so well that I supply it on trial.
All I ask is a postal card—no money wanted.
You are wronging yourself by delay.

How Thousands Get Well.

I have actual records of over half a million chronic cases which I have cured in the past twelve years — cured them with my Restorative — cured them on just the terms that I offer you.

My offer is this: —

Simply mail me this coupon, or write me a postal stating which book you need. I will then mail you an order on your druggist for six bottles Dr. Shoop's Restorative. You may take it a month on trial. If it succeeds, the cost is **$5.50.** If it fails, I will pay the druggist myself. And your word shall decide it.

My Restorative is the leading remedy of the world to-day. I have furnished it on those remarkable terms to nearly 550,000 people, and 39 out of each 40 have paid for it gladly, because they were cured. In practically every neighborhood everywhere there are cured ones telling others about it.

There are 39 chances in 40 that it will cure you, and I'll take the entire risk.

The Only Way to Cure.

In most chronic diseases the only way to cure is to strengthen the *inside* nerves.

Remedies that merely doctor the weak organ may seem to bring brief benefit. But real results come only when we restore the inside nerves. This is the power which alone operates the vital organs. And no weak organ can do its duty until that nerve power comes back.

My Restorative does that — always. I have spent a lifetime in perfecting it for just this one purpose. It treats a weak organ as you would treat a weak engine — by giving it more power. It does all that is needed, and does that which must be done, whether the trouble is little or severe.

Cut Out This Coupon

For we all resolve to send for something, but forget. Mark the book desired and mail this with your name and address to

Dr. Shoop, Box 232, Racine, Wis.

Book 1 on Dyspepsia.	Book 4 for Women.
Book 2 on the Heart.	Book 5 for Men (sealed).
Book 3 on the Kidneys.	Book 6 on Rheumatism.

Mild cases, not chronic, are often cured by one or two bottles. At all druggists.

Your money back

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DO YOU SUPPOSE that a company with a capital of $500,000.00, paid in full, and the proud reputation of 36 years of continuous success, would make such an offer and not carry it out to the letter?

DO YOU SUPPOSE we would jeopardize our standing with the public and our chances of still greater success by failing to fulfil any promise we make?

DO YOU SUPPOSE we would make such an offer if we did not have the utmost confidence in the satisfying quality of our goods?

WE KNOW we can please you and save you money, for HAYNER WHISKEY goes direct from our distillery to you, with all its original richness and flavor, carrying a UNITED STATES REGISTERED DISTILLER'S GUARANTEE of PURITY and AGE and saving you the big profits of the dealers. That's why it's best for medicinal purposes. That's why it's preferred for other uses. That's why we are regularly supplying over a quarter of a million satisfied customers. That's why YOU should try it.

Direct from our distillery to YOU

Saves Dealers' Profits! Prevents Adulteration!

HAYNER WHISKEY

PURE SEVEN-YEAR-OLD RYE

4 FULL QUARTS $3.20 EXPRESS PREPAID

We will send you FOUR FULL QUARTS of HAYNER'S SEVEN-YEAR-OLD RYE for $3.20, and we will pay the express charges. When you receive the whiskey, try it and if you don't find it all right and as good as you ever drank or can buy from any body else at any price, then send it back at our expense and your $3.20 will be returned to you by next mail. How could an offer be fairer? We take all the risk and stand all the expense, if the goods do not please you. Won't you let us send you a trial order? We ship in a plain sealed case; no marks to show what's inside.

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People are buying more by mail than ever before; one mail-order house does a business of a million dollars monthly; another receives 2,000 letters daily, nearly all containing money; mail-order trading is unquestionably the business method of the future. The field is large, the possibilities unlimited. Let us send you our plan (free) for starting beginners; it covers every point.

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There are some

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Just placed on the market by The Travelers Insurance Co.

They are something new and there is nothing now offered that can touch them in LIBERALITY, in INCREASED BENEFITS, in SIMPLICITY.

And the same old security, grown larger, that makes THE TRAVELERS' contracts the most widely popular among solid business and professional men, is behind them.

Agents in every town. Write us for details.

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Opposite Marshall Field & Co. **CHICAGO, ILL., U.S.A.**

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Russell Sage says:

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The Astors, Vanderbilts and Goelets made their fortunes in New York lots. You can now do the same. We will tell you how and we **GUARANTEE** 25 per cent increase in value in one year. We furnish free transportation to New York, free deed in case of death, etc. Write us to-day for free booklet and map.

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LADIES to do piece work at their homes. We furnish all-material and pay from $7 to $12 weekly. Experience unnecessary. Send stamped envelope to ROYAL CO., Desk B. C., 34 Monroe St., Chicago, Ills.

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Circulars, Newspaper. Press **$5.** Larger size, **$18.** Money saver. Big profits printing for others. Type-setting easy, rules sent. Write for catalog, presses, type, paper, &c., to factory. THE PRESS CO., Meriden, Conn.

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Upon receipt of 35c in stamps or money order we will mail you post-paid, 100 visiting or business cards of the latest style, including a beautiful **World's Fair Souvenir Card Case.** Pay your way to the World's Fair by acting as our agents. Write for particulars, **JULIER PRINTING CO.,** 223 Benoist Building, **St. Louis, Mo.**

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Money back if unsatisfactory. A free souvenir with every 2 orders. **A. C. HARLIE, 63 W. 108th St., N.Y. City**

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Any other make or model you want at one-third usual price. Choice of any standard tires and best equipment on all our bicycles. *Strongest guarantee.*

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Allen's Foot-Ease, **a powder for the feet.** It cures painful, swollen, smarting, nervous feet, and instantly takes the sting out of corns and bunions. **It's the greatest comfort discovery of the age.** Makes tight-fitting or new shoes feel easy. It is a certain cure for ingrowing nails, sweating, callous and hot, tired, aching feet. We have over 30,000 testimonials. **TRY IT TO-DAY.** Sold by all Druggists and Shoe Stores, 25c. **Do not accept an imitation.** Sent by mail for 25c. in stamps.

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[Mention this paper.]

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If so, send us your name & address, we will send you a package of our "Secret Cure" free, in a plain package with full directions how to give it secretly in tea, coffee, food, etc. It is odorless & tasteless, & will cure this dreadful habit, quickly & permanently without the patient's knowledge or consent. It is a positive & permanent "Secret Cure" for the Drink Habit & will cost you nothing to try it.

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MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING, with PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES THE CHILD, SOFTENS the GUMS, ALLAYS all PAIN; CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHŒA. Sold by Druggists in every part of the World. Be sure and ask for **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup,** and take no other kind.

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EVERY PAIR HAS PURE RUBBER HEELS THEY DON'T JAR YOUR NERVES
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Buy a pair and become our agent in your vicinity before some one else does. Give size and width usually worn.

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right now before stock goes to par or is withdrawn from sale.

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are expected early this summer and the price of stock will go out of reach the moment the first dividend is paid.

The Feather River Consolidated Mining Company

own outright, absolutely free and clear of debts, one of the richest gold-bearing placer properties ever discovered. Mine is located on the famous Feather River, Plumas Co., California.

Mr. Goodhue, the superintendent of the mine, in whose ability and integrity we have the greatest faith, assures us that the Company has at least

$2,300,000 IN SIGHT

in cement gravel deposit alone. Money is wanted to pay for the

MILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION

which the superintendent expects to complete within 90 days—then **look out for big dividends and stock advancing to par ($1.00) or higher.**

The Above Is Good Enough, But

mining experts who have carefully and conscientiously examined the Quartz Ledges owned by this Company say that the property when fully developed will have at least $6,000,000.00 more in sight, making a total of **$8,300,000.00** which is a very conservative estimate and ought to insure

A Life Income

To Every Fortunate Stockholder.

To complete the mill and push further development work, a limited number of fully paid and forever non-assessable $1.00 shares will be sold at

15 CENTS PER SHARE.

In comparison with the best mining propositions that have been on the market for some time past the price of this stock ought to be 40c. or 50c. a share. It is very liable to go even higher than that in a very short time.

$15.00 will buy 100 shares, par value $100.00
30.00 will buy 200 shares, par value 200.00
75.00 will buy 500 shares, par value 500.00
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Monthly Payments If Desired.

We believe this mine will prove the equal of some of the old-time California bonanzas and reasonably quick too.

Write for prospectus, No. 408, map, and engineer's reports. Booklet "How to Judge Mining Stocks," free. Address at once.

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10 DAYS FREE TRIAL

We will send any bicycle to any address with the understanding and agreement that you can give it **10 DAYS' FREE TRIAL** and if you do not find it easier running, handsomer, stronger, better finished and equipped, more up to date and higher grade than any bicycle you can buy elsewhere at $5.00 to $15.00 **more money, you can return it to us at our expense** and you will **not be out one cent.**

$10.95 Buys our new HIGH GRADE 1903 NEWTON BICYCLE, which we guarantee stronger, easier riding, better equipped; better frame, wheels, hubs and bearings than you can get in any other bicycle for less than $20.00.

OUR 1903 NAPOLEON BICYCLE is priced at about ONE-HALF the lowest price asked by others. For **Free Bicycle Catalogue**, hundreds of price surprises in bicycles and supplies, **our Free Trial and Guarantee Proposition and our Most Astonishing Offer**, cut this ad. out and mail to **SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO., CHICAGO**

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for Public Exhibitions, Church Entertainments, for illustrating sermons. Many sizes, all prices. Chance for men with little capital to **make money.** 260 page catalogue **free.**

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Discoverer of This Magic Compound That Grows Hair in a Single Night.

Trial Package Free.

A trial package of a new and wonderful remedy mailed free to convince people it actually grows hair, stops hair falling out, removes dandruff and quickly restores luxuriant growth to shining scalps, eyebrows and eyelashes and restores the hair to its natural color. Send your name and address to the Altenheim Medical Dispensary, 8715 Foso Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, for a Free trial package, enclosing a 2-cent stamp to cover postage. Write to-day.

A bottle of

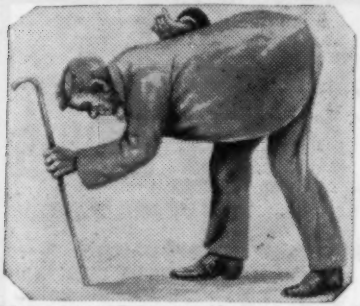
Pabst

Blue Ribbon

The purest and most widely known brand of beer in use.

Millions of bottles annually consumed by an appreciative and critical public in every part of the civilized world.

This Man was perfectly and permanently cured from Rheumatism by The Jebb Discovery, after suffering for twelve years.



This man says: "For twelve years I suffered fearfully with Rheumatism. My back was so affected that I was nearly doubled together, my head and shoulders being lower than my hips. Thanks to The Jebb Discovery I now walk erect and though years have elapsed, I have never felt a return of Rheumatism."

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The **Jebb Discovery** for Rheumatism is sent under a guarantee to cure. Two of the best banks in the state of Michigan vouch for the reliability of our Company.

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Santa Fe All the Way

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BURNED IN THE ENAMEL
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NO POISON

Has ever been found in the enamel of

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The Blue Label Proves It.

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The Autospin Freezer

Turning Ice Cream "blues" to a dazzling white.
The swift Autospin is the housewife's delight.
Fascinating Facts, facilitating fast freezing for families, forwarded free.

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Middletown, Conn.

$1.75 BUYS A $5.00 DRESS HAT

Cut this ad out and send it to us, **enclose $1.75 and we will send you this beautiful, stylish dress hat by express.** After received, if you do not say it is more stylish, more dressy, more becoming, a handsomer hat than your milliner could possibly design and make at any price, and if you and your friends do not say it is worth from $4.00 to $5.00, you can return it to us at our expense and we will immediately return your money. **THIS IS A GENUINE PARISIAN PATTERN HAT, the most stylish and exclusive design for the spring and summer of 1903.** A beautiful, tucked, black silk chiffon hat, real hand made on a silk wire frame, a very becoming low shape, the very newest style, made of the best tucked black silk chiffon, slightly raised on the left side and drooping in the back. The trimming on the top consists of two large clusters of crushed muslin pink June roses and foliage effectively arranged on both sides of the brim. On either side of the brim in front are two cut steel cabachon buckles. The facing as well as the rolling brim is overlaid with closely tucked black silk chiffon, while the low crown is covered with a plaque of fancy lace straw braid. The entire hat is draped with a very elegant black silk chiffon veil trimmed on the ends with three rows of fluted black silk, the same falling in graceful effect over the back. A large velvetta bandeau garnished with crushed muslin pink June roses completes the trimming of this stunning hat.

This New Stunning Parisian Pattern Hat is equally becoming to young and old, and carries a distinctiveness in style and workmanship such as can be had only from the hands of fashionable city milliners. You can tell at once it was never produced by any small city or town milliner. **Can be ordered in black or any other color desired.** Order today and wear the handsomest hat in your town. **Write for Free Millinery Catalogue.** Address

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2000 Revolutions a Minute!

FAN $1.50

Measurement 10 inches.
Throws air equal to any $15 electric fan.

RUNS BY WATER

Can be connected in any room or to any spigot.

Fed by $\frac{1}{16}$ inch Hole

Descriptive Circular "E" free on request.

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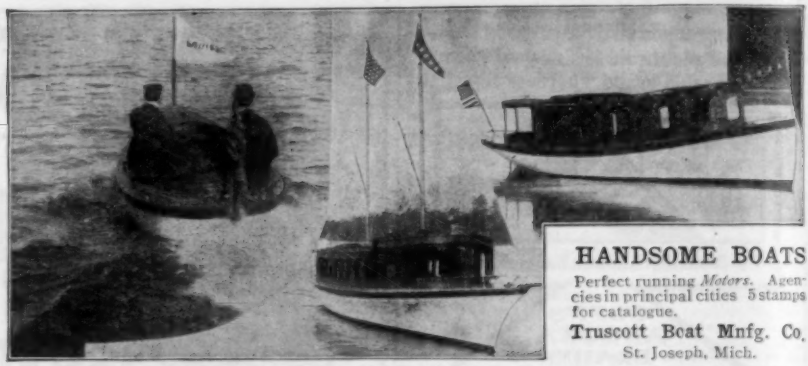

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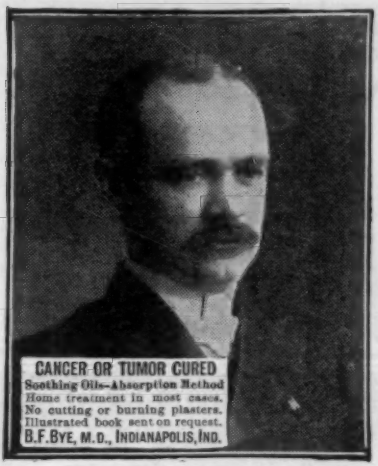

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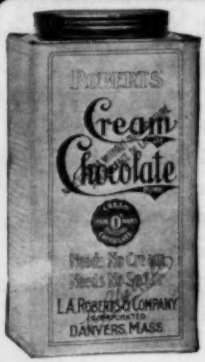

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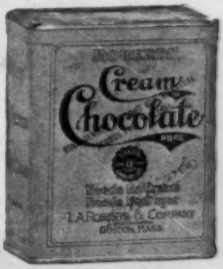

It has received the unqualified endorsement of the Pure Food Commissioners of every state in the Union to which it has been submitted.

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